

Jim Doyle
Governor



Reggie Bicha
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Department of Children and Families Gathers Strong Coalition to Improve Child Safety

Department of Children and Families Secretary Reggie Bicha joined with partners from across Milwaukee for the *Protecting Our Children, Strengthening Our Community* public awareness campaign. Recognizing that parenting is an incredibly important responsibility, DCF and partners are committed to working with parents and helping them be successful.

"During these difficult economic times, we must spread awareness that resources are available to those families who need help," Secretary Bicha said. "Milwaukee's children are all of our children, and we all share in the responsibility of keeping them safe."

Protecting Our Children, Strengthening Our Community focuses on increasing awareness on safe sleep practices, parental stress, Safe Havens, and the deadly effects of shaking infants. The public information campaign gives parents options and a place to turn to when facing stress or anxiety.

Secretary Bicha emphasized that *Protecting Our Children, Strengthening Our Community* was not just about helping vulnerable children in high-risk situations. The information campaign is a call for relatives, neighbors, law enforcement officials, nurses, teachers, coaches and community leaders to step forward and intervene when they recognize signs of child maltreatment or neglect.

"By increasing awareness about these important issues, we can empower and inspire individuals to take action and change behaviors in their communities," Secretary Bicha said. "We will provide strength when families feel helpless. We will offer protection when children are in danger. Together we can save lives."

Key partners from Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, The Parenting Network, the Children's Trust Fund and the City of Milwaukee Health Department all provided insights and information about safe parenting practices during Tuesday's press conference. A host of other community organizations also pledged their support for the *Protecting Our Children, Strengthening Our Community* campaign.

For information about resources available to parents, please visit the Department of Children and Families website at www.dcf.wisconsin.gov.

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